



Tapuitema



...ina ia manino le folauā.

Official American Samoa Government Weekly Newsletter

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Friday, April 25, 2008

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Gov. Togiola dedicates Wyland Whaling Wall #96, 'Ai o le Tai' Mural

World renowned muralist Wyland has completed the Whaling Wall on the north end of the Executive Office Building in Utulei. The mural, called "Ai O Le Tai," was dedicated on Saturday, April 12, 2008 in the presence of government leaders, local artists, and members of the general public.

For his unselfish dedication to promoting ocean conservation, and agreeing to produce a spectacular work of art free of charge, Wyland was bestowed the high chief title "Tusiata O Le Moana" by Governor Togiola Tulafono during the dedication ceremony.

The Governor met Wyland during the International Year of the Reef conference held in Washington DC earlier this year where he invited him to create a mural for American Samoa as part of local efforts to promote the preservation of coral reefs and increase awareness of their critical role in affecting global climate change.

A very pleased Togiola expressed his gratitude to Wyland for dedicating his time and carrying out the job free of charge for the government and people of American Samoa.

The marine life mural, which features a close look at undersea life, is meant to promote awareness about the importance of conserving marine resources among our young people, especially this the Year of the Reef.

It took less than a week to complete the mural and during that time, local young artists had the chance to meet and work with Wyland which for many, if not all of them, was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Local youngsters were given the opportunity to paint on the mural – an incredible experience in itself – considering the fact that the majority of our kids have never held a brush, let alone drawn a picture before.

Students were able to paint free-style any marine life on the mural. Wyland said that of the million children he has worked with in the 50 states, the local art students were the finest young artists on the blue planet. *(Continued on page 2)*

Wyland's Whaling Wall completed and dedicated *(continued from page 1)*

"Our young people are talented, but they have limited resources and opportunities to pursue art on a grand scale," Togiola said during his weekend radio program. "The mural helps us to see the rich marine life in our corals. The coral reefs are important to us. They protect and feed our people. They are a part of our lives."

Wyland's mural was painted after he went diving for inspiration at the Fagatele Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

Togiola said that Wyland has donated all copyrights and privileges for the EOB Whaling Wall at no cost, meaning we can use its value and resources to help raise funds for the upcoming 10th Pacific Festival of the Arts and later, the construction of a marine science center which Togiola says will promote marine research, education, and public awareness.

As Governor, Togiola says he is committed to supporting environmental stewardship and marine conservation, and he encourages everyone to appreciate and assist in protecting our fragile ocean resources. He also challenges local art students and teachers to create another mural on the wall of the Feleti Barstow Public Library, and to decorate as much of the local landscape with beautiful works of art.

Wyland, 51, painted his first Whaling Wall in Laguna Beach, CA 27 years ago. As the official US artist for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing, China, Wyland will be painting his 100th Whaling Wall there.

The 2008 International Year of the Reef is a world wide campaign to raise awareness about the value and importance of coral reef ecosystems.



High Chief "Tusiata ole moana" being presented gifts by Gov. Togiola after he was bestowed the high chief title during the dedication of the "Ai ole tai" mural on Saturday, April 12, 2008.

HISTORICAL NOTES

By: Stan Sorensen, Historian, Office of the Governor

On April 17, 1960, on the 60th anniversary of Flag Day, American Samoa's new flag was hoisted for the first time. For many years, American Samoa did not have an official flag. "Then, in the 1950s, the Office of the Governor solicited ideas for a flag from the local citizens. These were screened by the traditional leaders in Executive Council and a final design was worked out by the Institute of Heraldry of the U.S. Army."

On April 17, 1970, at 12:07:44 p.m. Central Standard Time, the crew of Apollo 13 splashed down only 4 miles from the prime recovery ship USS Iwo Jima. Reentry required the unusual step of undocking the lunar module, which had been retained for the flight back to Earth, in addition to the separation of the damaged service module. The lunar module had remained attached to the spacecraft to preserve the maximum electrical power in the command module for entry. The reentry was similar to previous flights and landing occurred at 142:54:41 at 21°38'24"S latitude and 165° 21'42"W longitude. The landing was within sight of the recovery ship, Iwo Jima, and the crew were on board within 45 minutes. The astronauts for the Apollo 13 mission were, Mission Commander, Capt. James A. Lovell, Jr.; Command Module Pilot, John Leonard Swigert, Jr.; Lunar Module Pilot, Fred W. Haise, Jr. After their recovery they headed to American Samoa for a brief stop before they flew to Hawaii. The 1970 American Samoa Annual Report to the Secretary of the Interior, describes the events of that day and the next as follows. "The return of the Apollo 13 crew to American Samoa following their splashdown on April 17 made Pago Pago the dateline for the world's top news story. About 25 correspondents for wire services, newspapers, radio and television networks rushed to the territory to cover the arrival. Flag Day was celebrated on the day of the splashdown, marking the 70th anniversary of the raising of the Stars and Stripes on Tutuila. Many of the correspondents had arrived early and filed stories on the colorful ceremony. One television network made a Flag Day documentary film which was shown to a large viewing audience. The astronauts arrived by helicopter on April 18, en route to Honolulu and a meeting with President Nixon. They were welcomed by thousands of Samoans [as well as then Governor John M. Haydon] and the newsmen sent out thousands of words of copy which was handled by the Office of Communications without one delay." We just concluded celebrating our 70th celebration of Flag Day and it turned out to be the largest in the history of American Samoa. On top of that, the three astronauts popped in unexpectedly and this created an even greater celebration. It certainly was a thrill to meet them and a very exciting occasion for everybody. About three or four thousand people turned up almost instantly at the airport, along with dancing and singing groups, and about 30 newspaper men from all over the world who managed to find their way into here almost overnight. About 20 of them are still here. We had them up for cocktails yesterday afternoon.

On April 17, 1973, the Official Seal of American Samoa, with the motto "*Samoa Muamua le Atua*" ("Samoa, Let God be First") was dedicated on the 73rd anniversary of Flag Day.

Governor working on federal tax incentives for American Samoa

Governor Togiola Tulafono recently began sending out federal tax incentive proposals to Congressional members, in an effort to provide benefits not only for the local canneries, but also current and new businesses looking to operate in the territory.

“The credit incentives will benefit all types of businesses to create or retain permanent, full time jobs in the territory, as well as to promote significant capital investment in the facilities and equipment which those workers will use.”

Togiola said during his weekend radio program that there are currently no federal tax credit incentives for American Samoa because Section 936 and 30A federal tax credits have both expired, and the incentives were only for the canneries.

According to the Governor, the tax credit incentive proposal would benefit all types of businesses, and the American Samoa Government needs incentives in place when inviting businesses and/or investors to the territory.

Togiola said that tax credits will be given to businesses that renew their local operations, offer good salaries to its workers, and look to employ a workforce instead of replacing people with machines. He said the territory does not need those kinds of companies but instead, businesses that can provide continued employment.

The Governor submitted during his recent appearance before the US Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee two proposals aimed at providing incentives for job creation and economic activity for American Samoa.

The first proposal is an alternative to Congressman Faleomavaega’s measure now pending in Congress, which seeks to extend federal tax credit for the two canneries operating in the territory.

Togiola’s proposal would extend eligibility to all domestic corporations, not just the two canneries. The Governor is rallying for the passage of the proposal, saying that the loss of trade incentives for our economic development places greater reliance on alternative programs.

The second proposal is the American Samoa Territorial Employment Program Incentive which takes the form of a non-refundable tax credit that can be used to reduce the income taxes a person may owe to the American Samoa Government.

The purpose of the incentive is to “create or retain permanent, full time jobs in the territory, as well as to promote significant capital investment in the facilities and equipment which those workers will use.”

***10TH FESTIVAL OF PACIFIC ARTS COMING SOON...
PLEASE KEEP AMERICAN SAMOA CLEAN!***

ASG RADIO PROGRAM

With: Gov. Togiola Tulafono

On: Showers of Blessings FM 104.7 Saturdays @ 7a.m.- 9:00a.m. Call: 699-8123/8124

SHARE IMPORTANT INFORMATION & ACTIVITIES IN YOUR ASG NEWSLETTER

with your ASG workforce as well as the citizens of American Samoa.

Email your articles, announcements, pictures or other information to:

Harry Stevens (harry.stevens@americansamoa.gov or Tialuga Vince Iuli (vince.iuli@americansamoa.gov)

Fiber Optic Cable will be up and running by year's end

If everything goes as planned, the territory should be connected to fiber optic cable by December.

Governor Togiola Tulafono announced during his weekend radio program that a deposit has been made for the fiber optic cable deal and a ship date has been scheduled for later this year in November.

An agreement between the American Samoa Government and the parties involved in the redeployment of the Pacific Rim East undersea fiber optic cable that will connect American Samoa with the Aloha State is expected to be signed sooner than later.

Earlier this month, Governor Togiola signed into law legislation that amends the \$20-million-dollar loan from the American Samoa Government's Employee Retirement Funds, to include \$3 million for the fiber optic cable project. (Other projects funded under the new legislation include maintenance for the Governor H. Rex Lee Auditorium, and much needed repair work for the visa road in Lauli'i).

In his letter to the Fono last week, Togiola wrote, "These projects, especially the fiber optic cable project, will assist directly with the economic development of the territory, as well as improvement of the health, safety, and welfare of our residents."

The fiber optic cable project seems to be progressing very well. The cable is already in place and a submarine vessel will be moving the cable to make the connection between here and Hawaii.

The American Samoa Government's share of the project is \$9 million, of which \$3 million is due upon signing of the agreement, with the remaining \$6 million to be paid by August 1. With that, ASG will own one-third of the company that owns the cable.

The PacRim fiber optic cable deal involves the ASG, Telecom New Zealand, Merchant Capital, and Elandia Incorporated.

Addressing water contamination problem in American Samoa progressing, EPA report says

The United States Environmental Protection Agency released yesterday their 2008 progress report for the Pacific South West Region (Region IX), which covers western states and Pacific territories including American Samoa.

The report cites environmental infrastructure problems faced by the US Pacific territories saying, "In American Samoa, 17% of residents have been exposed to Leptospirosis – a bacterial disease – as a consequence of piggeries contaminating water." Additionally, in the past, raw sewage contaminated the territory's drinking water wells and surface waters.

The over 100 page report looks at environmental progress and problems last year, from clean air, land, and water, to community progress. It says that American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and Guam "face disproportionately severe environmental infrastructure problems."

According to the report, with help from the EPA, American Samoa is using outreach, compliance assistance, enforcement, and a polluted runoff prevention program to address water contamination from small piggeries.

Earlier this week, Region IX presented to the American Samoa Environmental Protection Agency a plaque to recognize the local Piggery Compliance Program which was launched over a year ago.

The EPA is using grants, technical assistance, and collaborative approaches to support community-based leadership in solving environmental problems, as well as geographic information systems (GIS) tools to target enforcement, grants, and other resources to the island communities most heavily impacted, and also the most vulnerable.

The USEPA, in collaboration with these diverse island territories, has focused resources and formed partnerships in an effort to promote public health and environmental improvements.

The report says that in return, these same communities help EPA integrate environmental justice priorities into the agency's everyday work. The goal is to ensure that all communities have meaningful involvement in decisions that affect them, and that all people have clean air, water, and land where they live, work, and play.

Governor Togiola signs MOU with InfoTech to open local call center

Governor Togiola Tulafono has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the American Samoa Government and Information Technologies American Samoa (InfoTech), a company that has been planning to open a call center operation in American Samoa for over two years.

The purpose of the MOU is to identify, with clarity, what each party will provide.

The presence of the call center industry in the territory is a long time coming, with the fiber optic cable project expected to become a reality by the end of the year. Having an undersea fiber optic connection to the world provides an opportunity for intellectual service companies to locate in the territory.

The Governor said on his weekend radio program that the agreement for laying the fiber optic cable will soon be signed, and the cable is expected to be laid in November and be on our shores by December.

“The signing of the MOU marks the official beginning of a project that has the potential to be the most important economic development initiative ever undertaken in American Samoa,” said Governor Togiola. “The call center is a creative way to take advantage of our uniqueness. We are Americans and have excellent English language skills. Thus, this is the type of true economic development we need.”

Togiola said the call centers will not only bring money and ideas to our islands, it will also provide excellent new and high level job opportunities for thousands of our people

The InfoTech call center is the first of many potential “intellectual service” companies looking to American Samoa as a venue to set up shop. The call centers will boost the local economy, as the companies are looking to hire 2,000 local workers each. (Intellectual service describes companies offering services requiring special skills in areas like computers, public relations, graphic arts, website design, accounting, reading, math, data storage and many more. The special English language skills available on island, combined with the status as a territory of the United States, makes American Samoa a very attractive location for intellectual service providers).

InfoTech is yet to finalize a site for their operations, although suggested sites have included the Tafuna Industrial Park and the area near the Veterans Stadium.

The MOU was presented to Governor Togiola for signing in June of 2007. The plan was to sign the MOU once ASG was in substantial agreement to bring the PacRim East undersea fiber cable to American Samoa. The parties have discussed all the provisions of the MOU and the Governor has expressed his agreement with the document. The final signing of the document came after several months of planning and review.

Governor Togiola expressed his delight with the official signing of the MOU and says he looks forward to the call center bringing in many benefits for the territory.

InfoTech CEO Mark Hunsaker said the company is excited about the project as it provides excellent employment opportunities for community college and secondary school graduates.

“You will be seeing a great deal of activity here as we start site preparation, begin construction, advertise job opportunities, and begin training programs,” he said, adding that young people graduating from high school or ASCC and planning to leave the island for employment should “reconsider before traveling,” because the call center has the potential to provide the kind of opportunity for which they may be looking.

With the MOU, InfoTech will now be able to complete contracts with their clients, finalize financing, and begin building almost immediately. In addition to direct employment at the call center, many support businesses will be required, like computer support, electronics, electrical, air conditioning, maintenance, security, food service, recreation and transportation. Existing services will expand their operations and new companies will be established to service the call center.

The call center will be paying well above current average wages, so there will be a need for more vehicles, new housing, high-end clothing and other merchandise not affordable by most workers in the territory.

New developments, job opportunities, and other exciting news will be available through the local media, and email inquiries may be sent to info@infotechsamoa.com

InfoTech requests that you do not inquire about employment unless you are replying to specific employment opportunity advertisements. InfoTech would like to hear from you now if you have call center experience as a supervisor or trainer.

Rose Atoll



Governor Togiola Tulafono recently returned from a scientific voyage aboard the NOAA ship *Hi'ialakai*, which was conducting coral reef ecosystem monitoring surveys around Rose Atoll National Wildlife Refuge in support of NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program.

The Governor's participation on the cruise was an important milestone for coral reef conservation and management in the region. He successfully witnessed and learned a tremendous amount about the coral reef ecosystems under his jurisdiction and became much more knowledgeable about the value of NOAA's Pacific Reef Assessment and Monitoring Program.

Rose Island Historical Data by Historian Stan Sorensen, Office of the Governor

On June 13, 1722, Dutch navigator Admiral Jacob Roggeveen, after "discovering" Easter Island and several islands in the Tuamotu group, arrived in Samoa. Roggeveen's three ships were the *Arend*, under Captain Jan Koster; the *Thienhoven*, under Captain Cornelis Bouman, and the *Afrikaansche Galeij*, commanded by Captain Roeloeff Rosendaal. They sighted Rose Atoll, which they named "Vuyle Eylandt" (Bird Island). On the following days, they sighted all of the Samoan islands, except for Savai'i, Apolima and Manono. Roggeveen named the Manu'a group the "Isles of Bouman" after Cornelis Bouman. He named Tutuila "Thienhoven Island" and 'Upolu "Groeningen Island."

Rose Atoll was re-discovered by French navigator Louis de Freycinet on October 21, 1819, on his voyage around the world in the *Uranie* and *Physicienne*. He named it for his wife, who made the voyage with him. In his journal he describes the appearance of the island and gives a chart, the deficiencies of which are readily explained by the fact that he did not come closer than a mile and a half.

Russian explorer Otto von Kotzebue made the next recorded observations, having passed the island in 1824. Not knowing of its prior discovery, he named it Kordinkoff Island, in honour of his first lieutenant.

Another French navigator, Jules Sebastien-Cesar Dumont D'Urville passed it on September 23, 1838, in the corvette *l'Astrolabe*. He described it as a heap of sand covered with a bouquet of green, very fresh and pleasant. He estimated the circumference of the reef as between six and seven miles, and noted the break in the northwest curve of the reef.

The first recorded landing on Rose Islet was made by the U.S. Exploring Expedition, under Commodore Charles Wilkes, October 7, 1839. Part of a day was spent in making a survey and observing the geology and natural history. Even then there were but three kinds of plants.

About twenty-five years later, Captain Rantzau, making explorations for German interests, made several expeditions to Rose Atoll, on one of which he took his little schooner through the shallow entrance and anchored in the lagoon. He produced a chart of the atoll and his observations are given by Eduard Graeffe in a German article on Samoa, published in 1873.

On July 10, 1900, Commander Benjamin Franklin Tilley, Commandant of the U.S. Naval Station Tutuila, Tui Manu'a Elisara and U.S. Navy Doctor Edward M. Blackwell raised the U.S. flag on Rose Atoll, and claimed it for the United States.

In January, 1920, Commander Warren Jay Terhune, then naval governor of American Samoa, visited Rose Atoll and erected a concrete monument with inscription: "Rose Island, American Samoa, Trespassing prohibited, Warren J. Terhune, Governor, Jan. 10, 1920."